in Punjab and Punjab returns to the mainstream of the nation's body politic.

Madam, I would like to convey the feelings of this House to Buta Singhji and I will discuss the matter with the Prime Minister and convey the feelings and then we can take the necessary steps together. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would also like to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by the honourable Members. It is a matter of grave concern to all of us when innocent people are being killed mercilessly. I also join with the feelings and the condolences which have been offered.

Now, let us take up the next item Now, clarifications on the statement regarding the Bofors contract.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (Shri Jagesh Desai) in the Chair

CLARIFICATIONS ON THE STATEMENT RE. BOFORS CONTRACT

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : (मध्य प्रदेश) उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपका आभारी हूं कि आपने हमें रक्षा राज्य मंत्री श्री शिव राज पाटिल द्वारा 14 अगस्त, 1987 को सदन में दिये गये बयान के बारे में स्पष्टीकरण प्राप्त करने का अवसर दिया। 14 अगस्त का श्री शिवराज पाटिल का बयान 12 अगस्त को उन्होंने सदन में जो कुछ कहा उसमें हुई भूल सुधार के लिये था—करेक्टिंग द रिप्लाई। श्री शिवराज पाटिल को कब पता लगा कि 12 तारीख को उन से गलत बयानी हुई है ? उन्हें यह अनुभूति कब हुई कि उनसे बड़ी भारी भूल हो गयी है, ऐसी भूल जिसका परिमार्जन करने के लिये उन्हें 14 अगस्त को, स्वतन्त्रता दिवस की पूर्व संध्या पर, राज्य सभा में अचानक प्रकट होना पड़ा और सदन की बैठक, जो 5 बजे समाप्त हो जानी चाहिये, उसको उनके वक्तव्य के लिये लम्बा किया गया। 5 बज कर दो मिनट पर उन्होंने बयान दिया और तीन मिनट पर बैठक स्थगित कर दी गयी जिससे किसी सदस्य को स्पष्टीकरण मांगने मौका नहीं मिला। आखिर जब श्री शिवराज पाटिल 12 तारीख को सदन में बोल रहे थे तब उनके वरिष्ठ सहयोगी श्री कृष्ण चन्द्र पन्त यहां मौजूद थे। अगर श्री पाटिल से कोई भूल हो रही थी तो पंतजी इशारा कर सकते थे उसका तत्काल परिमार्जन हो सकता था। मगर पंत जी भी समझ रहे थे कि कोई भूल नहीं हो रही है, श्री पाटिल जो कह रहे हैं बिल्कुल ठीक कह रहे हैं। 12 तारीख के बाद 13 तारीख को सदन की बैठक हुई थी। श्री पाटिल 13 तारीख को सदन में नहीं आये। 14 तारीख को भी 12 बजे नहीं आये, प्रश्नकाल के बाद नहीं आये, 5 बजे आये। इसका क्या रहस्य है ?

पहला सवाल मेरा यह है कि यह कब उन्हें पता लगा कि उनसे भूल हो गई है ? सचमुच कोई भूल नहीं हुई। अपने वक्तव्य में उन्होंने कहा है कि

"Some misunderstanding seems to have been created in some quarters in regard to my statement of the 12th August 1987."

सम क्वार्टर्स, सम मिस-अंडरस्टैंडिंग। क्या गलतफहमी है ? किस के मन में गलतफहमी है ?

श्री अरविन्द गणेश कुलकर्णी (महाराष्ट्र) : आप भी फारेन मिनिस्टर थे। आप भी ऐसा बोलते होंगे। यह डिप्लोमेटिक लैंग्वेज होती है।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : 12 तारीख का बयान बिल्कुल स्पष्ट था, दो टूक था। उससे किसी प्रकार का भ्रम पैदा होने की गुंजाइश नहीं थी। मैं उद्धृत करना चाहता हूं। यहां चर्चा हो रही थी। यह प्रश्न पूछे जा रहे थे कि बोफोर्स के श्री ब्रडीन जब भारत आये तो क्या हुआ। श्री पाटिल ने पहली बार माना कि बोफोर्स का एक प्रतिनिधि मण्डल आया था। श्री पाटिल ने यह भी माना कि उस प्रतिनिधि मण्डल से बातचीत हुई थी। श्री पाटिल ने यह भी स्वीकार किया कि वह जानकारी देने को तैयार था। लेकिन श्री पाटिल ने कहा कि हमने प्रतिनिधि से कहा कि हमें जबानी जानकारी नहीं चाहिये, हमें

[श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी]

लिखित जानकारी चाहिये । मैं उनके शब्दों को उद्धृत करना चाहता हूं

"We said: Give us the information in writing and if you are not going to give us the information in writing, well, we do not want information which can create problems for us."

मैं मानता हूं कि श्री पाटिल का इसमें लक्ष्य केवल कांग्रेस पार्टी से नहीं था, सरकार से नहीं था । वह शायद यह कह रहे थे कि इससे सारा देश मुशीबत में फंस जायेगा । इसलिये श्री पाटिल ने कहा जबानी जमाखर्च से काम नहीं होगा, लिख कर लाइये ।

महोदय, अभी कुलकर्णी जी कूटनीतिक क्षेत्र की बात कर रहे थे । क्या यह परम्परा नहीं है कि अगर विदेशों से और विदेशियों से बात हो तो बात जबानी भी होती है और बाद में लिख कर उसकी पुष्टि की जा सकती है । विदेशियों से बात करते समय हर चीज लिख कर ही होती है, ऐसा नहीं है । हमने उसी दिन समझ लिया था कि सरकार सच्चाई की जानकारी प्राप्त करने की इच्छुक नहीं है, वह तथ्यों का पता नहीं लगाना चाहती, वह सच्चाई पर पर्दा डाल रही है... (व्यवधान) ।

श्री अरविन्द गणेश कुलकर्णी : यही आपकी गलती होगी ।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : कुलकर्णी जी, आप अब और ज्यादा गलती मत करिये । उस दिन श्री पाटिल ने एक बात कही, उस बात को दोहराया—

"We wanted the information. The information was not given in writing."

उन्होंने बार बार राइटिंग पर जोर दिया । इसका मतलब यह है कि बोफ़ोर्स जबानी जानकारी देने को तैयार था । श्री पाटिल ने यही कहा और यही अर्थ निकाला गया । मेरे पास इंडियन एक्सप्रेस की रिपोर्ट है—

"When Mr. Patil referred to the Bofors' stand that it would convey the information sought only orally and not in writing, Mr. Upendra retorted, 'will anybody believe this cock and bull story?' "

आप इंडियन एक्सप्रेस को कह सकते हैं कि सरकार विरोधी है, इसलिये उस पर भरोसा नहीं करेंगे । मेरे पास टाइम्स आफ इंडिया की भी रिपोर्ट है... (व्यवधान) ।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह (बिहार) : यह तो राजीव गांधी जी की चिट्ठी है ।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : टाइम्स आफ इंडिया आजकल बड़ा प्रशंसक हो रहा है । उसमें है कि :

"In reply to an Opposition query regarding the visit of Mr. Bredin, Vice-President of the Bofors to India on July 3, it was stated that Mr. Bredin was willing to orally give the names but the Government did not accept it." क्या आपके शब्द अलग-अलग अर्थ रखते हैं और वह अर्थ दिन के साथ बदलते हैं? शब्द का जो अर्थ 12 तारीख को था वह 14 तारीख को नहीं रहा । जो समझने वाले थे वे सब भ्रम में थे । आप इतना बड़ा भ्रम पैदा करने में समर्थ हैं कि प्रतिपक्ष भी भ्रम में पड़ गया, समाचार पत्र गलत स्थिति में भटक गये । आपकी भी भूल का पता उस दिन नहीं लगा । 13 तारीख को नहीं लगा, 14 तारीख को दिन भर नहीं लगा । शाम को आपको एकाएक इल्हाम हो गया कि भयंकर भूल हो गई है, जिसका परिमार्जन करने के लिए सदन में जाना चाहिए ।

महोदय, 14 तारीख को दोपहर में क्या हुआ ? क्या यह सच है कि शिवराज पाटिल सदन में इसलिए सफाई देने के लिए आए कि इस दिन प्रधान मंत्री ने राष्ट्रपति भवन में अलंकरण विधि की समाप्ति के बाद कुछ पत्रकारों से जो बातचीत की और जिस पत्रकार वार्ता के बारे में अलग अलग विवरण प्रकाशित हुए हैं, उसमें यू०एन०आई० की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार या एक संवाद समिति की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा कि बोफर्स ओरली भी जानकारी देने के लिए तैयार नहीं है । अब बेचारे श्री शिवराज पाटिल क्या

करते ? उन्हें सदन में भागना पड़ा । इसलिए वे 14 तारीख को शाम को आए । उन्होंने कहा कि मेरे वक्तव्य से भ्रम पैदा हो गया है । "सम मिस अन्डरस्टेंडिंग, सम क्वार्टर्स', यह आपका हाई लेवल का क्वार्टर है । फिर श्री पाटिल ने अपने वक्तव्य में कहा—

"The fact of the matter is that Mr. Bredin did not give any convincing indication...."

यह कंविंसिंग इंडिकेशन क्या है? कंविंसिंग की कसौटी क्या है ? क्या यह कसौटी बदलती रहती है ? 12 तारीख को कंविंसिंग की कसौटी अलग थी, 14 तारीख को अलग हो गई । आप हमें विश्वास में लीजिए । बोफर्स क्या बताना चाहते थे ?

सैं प्रश्न पूछना चाहता हूं कि क्या यह सच है कि श्री ब्रेडिन जब आए और आपकी उनसे बातचीत हुई तो श्री ब्रेडिन ने कहा कि हम अपने बड़े अधिकारियों को स्वीडन से बुलाने के लिए तैयार हैं और हम लिखकर आपको जानकारी देंगे, मगर शर्त यह है कि वह लिखित सारी जानकारी एक बंद लिफाफे में सील होकर केवल प्रधान मंत्री को दी जाएगी और किसी को नहीं दी जाएगी । क्या यह सच है कि बोफोर्स के मामले में जो भी जानकारी आपके पास है उससे आपने सदन को अवगत नहीं किया है ? क्या यह सच है कि आपने सदन को अंधेरे में रखा है ? उस दिन प्रधान मंत्री ने पत्रकारों से वार्ता करते हुए जो बातें कहीं उससे संदेहों का निराकरण नहीं हुआ, जैसा आपकी सफाई से संदेहों का निराकरण नहीं हुआ, उलटे संदेह मजबूत हो गये, पुराने संदेह को बल मिला और नये संदेह पैदा हो गये । प्रधान मंत्री की प्रैस वार्ता के बारे में अलग अलग विवरण छपे हैं यह मैं पहले ही कह चुका हूं । एक विवरण के अनुसार The Prime Minister on Friday said that Bofors had given some information but not the full details of the gun deal. In the Swedish Audit Bureau report also there were names of some institutions but not individuals.

इंस्टीट्यूशंस के नाम हैं यह आपको मालूम है । वे इंस्टीट्यूशंस कौन से हैं? इसके बारे में आपने अभी तक सदन को जानकारी क्यों नहीं दी ?

The Prime Minister said, Bofors was willing to tell us something orally, but not in writing.

यह प्रैस ट्रस्ट का समाचार है । दूसरी एजेंसी का कहना है कि प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा कि हमको ओरली भी देने को तैयार नहीं थे । अब देशवासी किस पर भरोसा करे, कैसे भरोसा करें । उस दिन सदन में बड़े नाटकीय तरीके से बोफोर्स की एक चिट्ठी पेश कर दी गई । बोफोर्स ने और भी चिट्ठियां लिखी हैं । मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या सरकार 24 अप्रैल की बोफोर्स की चिट्ठी जो हमारे राजदूत को लिखी गयी थी, उसको सदन के पटल पर रखेगी ? क्या सरकार बोफोस से इस मामले में जो भी पत्र व्यवहार हुआ है, उस सारे पत्र व्यवहार को सदन के पटल पर रखकर सदन को विश्वास में लेगी, देश को विश्वास में लेगी ?

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं समाप्त करना चाहता हूं । अगर इसी तरीके से गलतबयानी की जायेगी अगर परस्पर विरोधी वक्तव्य दिये जायेंगे, अगर संदेहों के निराकरण के नाम पर नये संदेहों को जन्म दिया जायेगा । तो देशवासी एक ही निष्कर्ष निकालने के लिये मजबूर होंगे कि सरकार नहीं चाहती कि असली गुनहगारों के चेहरे बेनकाब हों क्योंकि सरकार भयभीत है कि अगर गुनहगारों के चेहरे बेनकाब होंगे तो खुद ही उसका चेहरा बेनकाब हो जायेगा ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) : और 13 माननीय सदस्य इस बारे में कहना चाहते हैं। मैं विनती करना चाहता

[श्री जगेश देसाई]

हूं कि संक्षेप में बोलें ताकि काम जल्दी समाप्त हो सके।

(Interruptions)

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY (Karnataka): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, when I look at this affair, I come to the only conclusion, i.e., that the Government is not honest. That is the only conclusion that we can reach in the circumstances. There have been prevarications, contradictions in the stand of the Government all along on the Bofors' issue. Mr. Shivraj Patil's speech and his clarification proved very clearly that fact that the Government want to indulge in misleading the Parliament and the people of India on the Bofors' gun issue. And by misleading, they foolishly think that they can get away with it. On the contrary, the things are becoming curiouser and curiouser of time goes on. The Government is caught in its own muddle; it is caught in its own web.

If you go through the speech of Mr. Shivraj Patil on the 12th August, anybody who has got the commonsense will be led to only one meaning in the speech, that is, the Government could have got information about the recipients of the kickbacks in the Bofors deal if they wanted to, but they did not want oral information. They wanted the information in writing. His statement is very clear. Information was available for some time but, perhaps, because of the confidentiality Clause, informaton may not be forthcoming in writing, and it was forthcoming orally. The language of the Minister is very clear. He said on the 12th: "We had asked for certain information, and the information we had asked for is about commissions paid which has been mentioned in the Audit Bureau Report. We wanted to know who are the recipients of the commission. That is the information we wanted. And when we found that information was not coming to us in writing but they wanted to convey that information orally, we thought it is not wise...."—and I do not know why they though it unwise—"....to have it at that particular point of time." So, the information was available at that particular point of time to have the information and the language is very clear. Then, as my colleague has put it, the Prime Minister later made a statement to the press that Bofors did no offer even oral information. Then Mr. Shivraj Patil, owing to the joint responsibility of the Government, thought it wise that he should contradict the statement made by him in Parliament. This is the gravest error he has committed. He thought Members can be hoodwinked or bypassed or misled—it has been mislead —and there is no other way out for him to please his Prime Minister. This is the kind of joint and collective responsibility we are seeing in the Government. Our friends are talking so loud about collective responsibility. The Prime Minister does not own his statement. If Shri Shivraj Patil has committed a blunder, a mistake committed a slip in the House, he should of course correct his statement. No objection, Rules of Procedure provide for that. What confirms my suspicion is, why did he select the time of 4.55 or 5.00 O'clock for a statement? If he had been very honest, if he wanted to take the House into confidence, if he wanted to set right the error if it was an error, he could have come soon after the Question Hour or sometimes when all of us would have been present. It is an important matter and if no advance notice is given, it is bound to be misunderstood. This was not done. He comes just five minutes before the House adjourns on that day and that was Friday when none of us was present, and makes the statement. After giving the background he said:

> "The fact of the matter is that Mr. Bradin did not give any convincing indication that a delegation from Bofor' would be prepared to give information required by us in

writing or verbally. This is borne out by the totality of my observations on this point on 12th August, 1987."

But the totality of observations made by my friend point out to only one thing, that is Bofors was prepared to give information orally, not in writing at that time. That is the totality. Even a person who has got elementary knowledge of English—if he goes through his speech—will confirm my view. The totality of his speech indicates that the Government could have got information orally, not in writing, if it wanted to, but it did not want oral information because he thought that there was a Committee of Parliament sitting and that Committee can get that information. That is the only thing he has said. Then why this kind of farce, complete farce? What made him to take this position? Therefore, Mr. Vice-Chairman, it confirms my doubt that the Government is all the time shielding something or the other on Bofors issue and the truth is not at all forthcoming. By misleading Parliament or making misleading statements or contradictory statements, you cannot get away from the truth. Therefore, it is my view that it is not a simple slip. It is not a slip at all. You made a correct statement in the first instance. You have made a wrong statement by correcting the correct statement on the 14th. Therefore, I charge you that you are trying to do something objectionable, something wrong, something heinous.

1.00 P.M.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI (Maharashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I do not agree with my friends when they are accusing the hon. Minister of confusing or diverting the issue from one to another. I am not in possession of all the records. But they are there. It is for the hon. Minister to explain what is 'oral' or 'in writing'. But, Sir, I would like the Members from the Opposition to appreciate one thing. It seems, the Bofors company itself is creating such a confusion and planting such stories in the minds of the people of this country and we are carried away. I do think, the company is blackmailing the Government also. In this connection, I would like to know whether the Government...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH (West Bengal): Not only giving money, but blackmailing also?

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI, That is your view. Our Government has already said that no money has been taken and that if anybody has taken, he will be punished; he will be hanged.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Hanged? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Why do you worry about that? (*Interruptions*) I am not talking about what the Secretary of Mr. Jyoti Basu did. I do not want to say that. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, will the remarks of Mr. Kulkarni about the Secretary of Mr. Jyoti Basu go on record?

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Why not?

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Because he is not present here.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: You say hundreds of things. Why should I not? (*Interruptions*).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): You go ahead, Mr. Kulkarni.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: You carry on. After you, I have to speak.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: The CPI (M) has a dichotomy of policy. One by Mr. Gorbachev and another by Mr. Namboodripad. (*Interruptions*)

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह . . . (व्यवधान) आपने क्या किया था ?

श्री अरविन्द गणेश कुलकर्णी : आप बीच में क्यों आते हैं, भाई ?

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) : आप मुझे देख कर बोलिये।

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: When everybody interrupts, it is my job to retort.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): You should not.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: It is a Parliamentary system. You do not go as per the law. Neither you are a lawyer nor I am a lawyer.

What I am saying is that the Opposition parties should really appreciate that the Bofors company is blackmailing the Opposition as well as the Government, both; blackmailing both. As I said, it is for the hon. Minister to explain about the 'oral' or 'in writing' part. I cannot explain. He knows more things. Now, Sir, it is my personal view which appeals to my conscience. But I make bold to ask the hon. Minister of State and the hon. Minister, Mr. Krishna Chandra Pant. Today, there is a news from Stockholm that the Public Prosecutor or whoever it is going to enquire into this. I would like to know whether the Stockholm news is correct or not. Is he going to do it? If so, what is the use of going into this 'oral' or 'in writing'? It is no use. Why are you going to Sweden for this? Do not go. I hope, the hon. Minister will clarify whether the news-item coming from Stockholm today has any relevance to the attempts by the Opposition parties to politicise the issue, create scandals in the country, which only create confusion in the minds of the people.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY (Tamil Nadu): Are we creating scandals?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, may I ask at the outset, since a responsible Member of the ruling party complains that Bofors has been blackmailing the Government,...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): It is his personal view.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: In view of this, may I ask the hon. Minister whether the Government will consider seriously the question of cancelling the order which the Government placed with the Bofors? If that will be done—that is my first question.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Why should they cancel it? The country needs the guns.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I have another set of clarifications from the hon. Minister.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): You ask clarifications only on the statement of the Minister.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: My point is, he has corrected certain things. I would like to know whether he will have to correct, or he will at the moment correct some other things regarding the statement that he has made. I would like to raise certain questions, seek certain clarifications regarding the procedure that was adopted to purchase the guns.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): I don't think that will fall within this. You restrict yourself to seeking clarifications on the statement made by the Minister. Please ask any clarification you want on that. Don't go beyond the subject matter.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, this is a House of Elders. I am entitled to place my views before you and the Minister because he has been speaking something to clarify and he has clarified a particular point. But he made a long statement. The long

statement contains some other issues also.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Which statement are you referring to?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I am coming to that, Sir. My point is whether the Minister...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI (Maharashtra): He cannot refer to that. He is wrong.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): There are so many other speakers. You restrict yourself only to the statement made by the Minister on the 14th. On that statement, you can ask any clarification you want.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I do not think there should be more than one person presiding over the House. The House is presided over by the hon. Vice-Chairman. I think he is quite competent to tell us what to do and what not to do. My point is regarding the procedure which is also a part of the statement. I have reliable information that the procedure that was adopted to purchase the guns was highly irregular.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): No, no, I will not allow that. I will only allow you to speak on the statement made by the Minister on the 14th. On that you can ask clarifications. Other aspects, I will not allow. This is not a debate. You have only to restrict yourself to asking clarifications. Please cooperate with me. There are so many other Members who want to speak. I cannot allow which cannot be allowed. You restrict yourself to the statement made by Shri Shivraj Patil. On that you ask clarifications.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Can't I ask him whether a firm GSQR was determined? Can't I ask him whether some officers were transferred summarily just to ensure that the Bofors deal goes through?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): I will not allow that. I will only allow clarifications on the statement made by Shri Shivraj Patil on the 14th. On that you can ask clarifications, if you want to, and he will reply if he deems it fit. Anything other than that I will not allow. No, please. This is not a debate.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I have some reliable information.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): If there is another occasion, you can do that, but not on this occasion. Please cooperate with me.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I do not agree with this, but I abide by it and do not ask any question.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Thank you. Mr. Dipen Ghosh.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Sir, it appears that the Bofors case has begun to haunt the Government. And therefore the Ministers do not know what to say and when to say. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the Ministers, including the Prime Minister, who have been given the charge by their party to shield the Government, have begun to fumble with the disclosure of truth after truth. So whatever statement a Minister makes on the 12th, he immediately goes to rectify the statement on the 14th. But I pity Shri Shivraj Patil that he had to eat his words not because of his own fault but because of some other's fault to maintain consistency in speaking untruth.

SHRI RAM AWADESH SINGH: His master's voice.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, my esteemed colleague, Mr. Vajpayee has indicated

[Shri Dipen Ghosh]

what made the Minister of State for Defence Production rush to the House at, say, about 5 o'clock in the afternoon when most of the Members were away from the House because it was the penaltimate day of the week and also it was a private Members' day, to make a statement correcting his earlier statement. But what did he say correcting his statement? He said:

> "The fact of the matter is that Mr. Bredin did not give any convincing indication that a delegation from Bofors would be prepared to give information required by us in writing or verbally. This is borne out by the totality of my observations on this point on 12th August, 1987."

Mr. Vice-Chairman, I don't take credit of knowing English better than Mr. Shivraj Patil does. But what exactly Mr. Shivraj Patil had stated on August 12, let me quote:

> "When we found that the information was not coming to us in writing but they wanted to convey that information orally, we thought, it is not wise to have it at that point of time."

So, the controversy was not that they did not want to give any information orally. He continued:

> "We wanted that if the company is ready to give the information confidentially or otherwise in writing or orally, let them give before the Committee and give it when it comes into existence."

He said, "Let them give the information to the Committee." The idea was that at least in totality Mr. Bredin wanted to give certain information orally, the Government wanted it in writing and the Government wanted the Swedish Government or Bofors or for that matter Mr. Bredin to give whatever information he has got, whether in writing or orally to the Committee direct. So, the question does not come to rectify what the Minister, Mr. Patil, had stated, something which had created misunderstanding in some quarters. There was no scope of creating any misunderstanding in any quarter by those who know at least elementary English and who could follow what you had stated on the 12th of August. But, as Mr. Vajpayee has pointed out, on the 14th, just before Mr. Patil rushed to this House to rectify his statement, another incident had taken place, and Mr. Prime Minister had made a statement to the press, which had created a controversy not only between two agencies, but also between the Government of India and the Prime Minister. When there was the controversy between the news sent by two agencies, different stories, enquiries were made with the Prime Minister's Information Advisor, Mr. H. Y. Sharda Prasad, and I quote from the newspaper reports:

> "I am not in a position to comment on what the agencies have filed,' he said unhesitatiningly55

Then again I quote:

> "You may take what has been filed,' he said unhesitatingly".

Even the Principal Information Advisor of the Prime Minister has stated to the press men to take what the Minister of State, meaning thereby Mr. Shivraj Patil, had stated in Parliament, not what has been stated by the Prime Minister as circulated by the two agencies. That is why I said, I pity Mr. Shivraj Patil because he had to eat his words not for his own fault but for some others' fault in his exercise to maintain consistency in speaking untruth. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, you will agree with me from your own experience in life not as a Member of Parliament alone.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Don't drag me.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Once one takes recourse to speaking untruth, he continues to speak one after another untruth. That is the experience of life. It has happened. It is happending. That is why I started by saying that Bofors has began haunting the Government.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Now, you seek your clarifications.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Before I seek clarifications, I want to make another point. I do not know whether it comes within the right of the Parliament. It is also reported in the press—I do not know—what made Mr. Patil to send emissaries to the press. Here is also another report that an officer from the Ministry of Defence public relations outfit walked into Express Office in the evening. He must have gone to other newspaper offices also. He handed over a statement which is quoted here in full, the statement which he made in the Parliament. Normally whatever statement is made in Parliament, it is sent to the press from the Parliament Office. What made the Ministry of Defence to send emissaries to each and every newspaper in the evening? That is also a question.

My first question is: Whether it is a fact that there was a message from the Prime Minister's office to Mr. Shivraj Patil for rectifying his statement in order to conform to what the Prime Minister has already stated to the press on the same day at 2.0'clock.

My second question is: Will the Minister please clarify in view of his rectified statement, how the 12th August statement about the intention of communicating the information by Mr. Bredin had created misunderstanding among certain quarters? In what way? Let me understand. I have understood in one way. The press has understood in the other way. So let the Minister make us understand because on that day we were not present. In what way it had created misunderstanding? The language was very simple.

My third question is: Will the Minister tell us what exactly transpired in the meeting between Mr. Bredin and the Government officials? On that day, Mr. Pant also did not disclose the date of the letter which I wanted to know. Later I checked up it was not on the record. My question was that the letter which Mr. Pant had quoted whether it was in reply to the letter the Government of India had sent to Bofors asking for more information, adequate information, on the 16th July? The date was not indicated. May I know whether Mr. Pant will please let us know the date on which that letter was written to the Government of India? Thank you.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, naturally, I am required to confine my remarks on the statement made by the hon. Minister on the 14th of August, 1987. In the statement, the Minister said, "some misunderstanding seems to have been created." As a matter of fact, Sir, there has been no misunderstanding at all. The country and the Parliament is faced with one very clear single question. The single and clear question is: who are the recepients of kickbacks in terms of the National Audit Bureau's Report of Sweden? Now, in course of his reply—that is the core of the question, the name of Bredin came in. Bredin is irrelevant without this context. Mr. Vice-Chairman, you will agree with me that the name of Mr. Bredin, the Vice-Chairman of Bofors Company has got relevance in the context of this question as to who are the recepients of the kickbacks? Now the statement earlier made on the 12th of August by Mr. Pant said that they were agreeable to give some information orally, verbally but not in a written manner. You check it

[Shri Chitta Basu]

up. You said that. Unless they give the information in a written manner, this information would be not of any use for the Government or the Parliament or for anybody. Now, in this statement of Mr. Patil of the 14th August, 1987, he said, "the totality of my observation on this point is that Bredin or the Bofors Company did not agree to give any information either in a written manner or orally." Therefore, there are conflicts, contradictions between the statement made by Mr. Pant and the statement made by Mr. Patil. Now, again, in the course of debate, Mr. Pant produced a letter written by the Bofors Company. I am not going into that fact because that is a cock and bull story. In that letter, it is written that Bofors Company is willing to cooperate with the Committee and in this context, how can that letter be taken in a way that they will sincerely cooperate, because the burden of the argument of the hon. Minister, Mr. Pant was: look, that the Bofors Company is willing to cooperate with the Committee. In the background of the information now given by the hon. Minister of State for Defence Production, Mr. Patil said that they were not willing to give any information either orally or in a written manner. I want to be clarified, of course, from Mr. Pant how he considers that the Bofors Company is serious sincere in cooperating with that Committee. (*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. C. PANT): Sir, the answer is very simple. Please join the Committee and find out.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: That is a different thing. I appreciate your appeal. But you explain that point that the Company which does not agree even to give you oral or written information, which you yourself made and now you recommend that we should take seriously the letter written by them.

Again I say, the core of the question is to get, obtain, relevant information. If Bofors have denied, automatically it is relevant to say that all the other steps should be taken by the Government in the matter of getting the information from Bofors or any other source because the core of the question is, the Parliament is faced with the problem as to who are the recipients of the kickbacks. If Bofors do not agree to give any information, there are other ways also. Would the Government, at this point of time, also clarify as what other steps the Government has, by this time, taken or what steps it proposes to take in the matter of knowing the names of the individuals or institutions who happened to be or who are alleged to have been the recipients of the kickbacks? That is the question and that reflects the totality, as he has mentioned, of his observations. The totality of observations means the totality of the Bofors case and the totality of the Bofors case makes it incumbent on the Government to take steps to find out the truth about it, even if Bofors does not agree to give this information.

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) : श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय । आप पांच मिनट में खत्म कर दीजिए ।

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय (उत्तर प्रदेश) : मैं चार मिनट में ही खत्म कर दूंगा ।

माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, 12 अगस्त को माननीय शिवराज पाटिल ने जो वक्तव्य दिया था जिसमें कहा था-

"Bradlin has come here who is the Vice-President of Bofors Company and then went. He wanted to know who are the receipents of the commission."

उसी समय आडवाणी जी ने टोकते हुए यह कहा था कि शायद ब्रेडीन जी यह कह गये हैं कि 6 अगस्त को, किसी डिफेंस मिनिस्टरी के अधिकारी से बात करते हुए कि जब वह लौट आयेंगे तो जो

कुछ भी जानकारी सम्भव हो सकेगी उसको वह देंगे। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि उनके जो रक्षा मंत्रालय अधिकारी थे उनसे ब्रेडीन जी की क्या बातचीत हुई ? दूसरे पाटिल जी ने यह भी कहा कि सरकार खुद जानना चाहती है कि किन लोगों ने कमीशन लिया क्योंकि यह बात बिल्कुल सिद्ध हो चुकी है, साफ हो चुकी है कि बोफोर्स के मामले में कमीशन लिया गया है। इस सिलसिले में एक समाचार की ओर आपका ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूं। लार्स रिंगबर्ग जो प्रोसिक्यूटर हैं उनकी ओर से स्टेटमेंट सभी अखबारों में छपा है जिसमें कहा गया है :

"SWEDISH POLICE TO LAUNCH INQUIRY

"The Stockholm Prosecutor, Mr. Lars Ringberg, told Swedish Radio he had decided there were sufficient grounds to suspect bribes had been paid in connexion with the order for artillery which Bofors won in the face of stiff international competition.

"There is reason to believe that crimes of bribery have been carried out in connexion with this case," Mr. Ringberg said.

An independent inquiry into the bribery allegations by Sweden's National Audit Bureau in May concluded that unaccounted payments had been made in connexion with the deal.

Mr. Ringberg said he hoped a criminal inquiry would be able to turn to Sweden's Central Bank for details of the alleged illegal payments."

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): I want to know whether it will go on record. If it goes on record, am I expected to answer all these things also?

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI (Madhya Pradesh): It cannot go off the record. (*Interruptions*)

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय : मैं इसलिए कह रहा हूं कि 12 अगस्त की स्टेटमेंट की जब तक चर्चा नहीं की जायेगी और 14 अगस्त का जिक्र नहीं किया जायेगा तब तक कुछ पता नहीं लगेगा।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) : 12 अगस्त की स्टेटमेंट इस बारे में थी और 14 में यह था, इन दोनों में क्या फर्क था वह बता दीजिए।

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय : वही बता रहा हूं। रक्षा मंत्रालय के अधिकारियों से क्या बातचीत हुई एक तो यह जानना चाहता हूं और दूसरे यह कि इस सिलसिले में कोई भी मिस-अंडरस्टेंडिंग क्या कहीं हुई है ? मैं सिर्फ एक प्रश्न पूछना चाहता हूं कि जो प्रोसीक्यूटर है वहां के, उन्होंने कहा कि इस सिलसिले में वह जांच करेंगे . . . । ऐसी जानकारी प्राप्त करने के लिए कि कमीशन प्राप्त करने वाले कौन-कौन लोग थे, कमीशन पाने वाले कौन हैं, इस सिलसिले में भारत सरकार क्या सहयोग देगी ?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Now Mr. Gopalsamy. Would you like to speak now or after lunch?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Let him speak after lunch. Let us adjourn for lunch now.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): All right. The House stands adjourned for lunch till 2.30 P.M. . .

The House then adjourned for lunch at thirty-one minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at thirty-one minutes past two of the clock, **The Vice-chairman (Shri G. Swaminathan)** in the Chair.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): Now, Mr. Gopalsamy.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, Bofors ...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Bofors ghost is haunting them!

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: That is your point. Your point is that it is haunting them like a ghost. But I say that it is hanging like the Sword of Damocles, hanging like, I should say, the 'gun of Damocles'. Sir, our honourable Minister of State for Defence, Mr. Shivraj Patil, made a statement on the 12th August and then, on the 14th August, he entered the House — he should bear with me for this word — surreptitiously, knowing pretty well that most of the Opposition leaders and Members would have left the Chamber. For what? To contradict the earlier statement, to give a different story. He says that Mr. Bredin did not give any convincing indication that a delegation from Bofors would be prepared to give the information required by us in writing or verbally. The previous speakers have dewelt on this point elaborately. On the 12th August, he says:

> "They wanted to convey that information orally. Because we thought that it was not wise to have it at that point of time,...."

And, Sir, he goes on. Then I interrupted him and I did seek a clarification from the Minister. I asked:

> "Mr. Minister, I have asked a specific question whether there was any offer by Mr. Bredin that the Bofors delegation would be visiting India and, if so, why that offer was rejected and for what reasons."

That was the specific question. To this question, Mr. Shivraj Patil answers:

> "They had come here and we had wanted the information. They have not given the information and there was no convincing indication also that having come here in the delegation they would give us the information. We said, 'Give us the information in writing', and if they are not going to give the information in writing, well, we did not want that information which could create problems for us."

So, it is crystal-clear that the Minister himself has admitted that the Bofors delegation, that is, delegation from the Bofors side, had said that they were giving the information, not in writing, but orally. That is what he stated on the floor of the House and he subsequently corrects the statement. I want to know whether it is because you want to conceal the truth, to hide something. When Mr. Bredin came here on 3rd July, the Defence Ministry officials had discussions with him. Mr. Bredin offered that a full-fledged delegation including the President of BOFORS Company would visit India. That was accepted by the Defence Ministry. Mr. Arun Singh, the then Minister of State for Defence, an honest man, a gentleman, — I have got great respect for him — accepted it. He was handling the portfolio. Then what happened on 4th July? On the arrival of our Prime Minister from Moscow, the decision was changed. What for? It created suspicion and doubt in the minds of the people throughout the country. So, this Bredin affair is not a small matter. It is the most vital part. They offered and that offer was accepted by the Defence Ministry. It was conveyed to the BOFORS Company. It was conveyed to the Swedish Government. Then you changed the decision on this point. Members from this side sought clarifications and our hon. Minister said

that since they were prepared to give oral information, we were not prepared to take it. Then why did he contradict? Why this acrobatics and somersault? Why this confusion? Do you want to conceal something because you want to protect the culprits? This is the million dollar question in the minds of the people throughout the country. Therefore, that statement, corrected by the hon. Minister Mr. Shivraj Patil, has totally destroyed the credibility of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's Government.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, this is one more instance of how the country is being taken for a ride and the Parliament is being taken for granted. It is very unfortunate that in this operation cover-up, some good people in the Government, who are noted for their honesty and efficiency, are being made the scapegoats. We have seen the instance of Mr. Arun Singh. Mr. Shivraj Patil had to swallow his own words. I hate to use strong words against him because he gave the truth. He told the truth to the extent possible. On that day, he spoke so many things which my colleagues have already quoted. I do not want to repeat. He not only told the House that Mr. Bredin was prepared to give the information orally, but also argued why they did not want to take the information orally. I will read only that portion of Mr. Patil's speech. He says:

> "Now if information is given to some of us or to the officers in the Ministry orally and then claiming confidentiality, anybody can say that you got the information, but you are not disclosing and anybody can say that you got so and so names, but you are not disclosing. We do not want to create that kind of things."

That is the argument he gave for not taking the information orally. That was his argument. And they insisted that they should give the information in writing and that also not on the spot, immediately, but when the Parliamentary Committee is appointed. That was the urgency they have shown in this matter. That is another aspect which I do not want to go into. When the whole country is agog with this, when the whole country is exercised over this matter, when the Prime Minister himself is being attacked in this case, here is somebody coming and saying, "I will give the names", and we say, "no, no, not now, wait until the Parliamentary Committee comes". That is why I said that this is all cock and bull story. Nobody would believe, nobody is believing your statements. But, unfortunately, it is being repeated every day in the House and outside. And the most unfortunate thing is, I do not know—I said last time also—why the Prime Minister himself is rushing into this controversy every now and then. We do not know. If the Minister has made a wrong statement, he should have corrected on that day; his colleague, who was sitting beside him, should have corrected him or he should have come next day and corrected this thing. But why should the Prime Minister say something in the Rashtrapati Bhavan and then send word to the Minister and force him to correct the thing on that day and again issue another statement from the Prime Minister's Office in the evening giving elaborately what happened and all that? And if people are criticising the Prime Minister and dragging him into the controversy, he is responsible, he is himself to be blamed, because he is himself complicating all the matters, forcing the Minister to tell untruths. That is unfortunate. Now, I do no want to embarrass Mr. Patil. He knows what is the truth. We know what is the truth. Therefore, no use kidding the House, nobody is going to believe all this thing. But I want

[Shri Parvathaneni Upendra]

to know what has happened on July 3 and 4 when Mr. Bredin came. Who talked to them? Who talked to him and his colleagues? Was it at the official level or the Ministerial level? Have you kept any minutes of the discussions that day? Generally that is the procedure in Government. When some foreign delegation comes and they talk something, you keep a note of it. I want to know: What is that note? What does it contain? Can he quote from that note if it has not been altered now in consonance with the wishes of the Prime Minister? I do not know. It must have been altered also. But, if you are truthful, kindly tell from the note, from the minutes you have kept on that day of the discussions, what exactly Mr. Bredin said and how you have responded.

Sir, all said and done, I only want to say just one word in conclusion. I do not want to take much time. It is unnecessary because we know what is what. People know what is what. Whatever truth has to come out will come out in the investigations which are in progress now. But if you remember, in all these things, for the last four months, whatever you have been telling, whatever you have been correcting, whatever you have been repeating, they all result in the loss of credibility of your Government and your Prime Minister. And also what is the casualty? Casualty is the truth. Casualty is not only your credibility but casualty is also the truth. And ultimately the casualty is also the honour and prestige of this country abroad. Thank you, Sir.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, Mr. Shivraj Patil, the Minister, gave a statement on the 12th and made a correction on 14th. And Mr. Shivraj Patil is a very conscientious Minister. He does his homework. Therefore, when he came to answer with regards to Mr. Bredin a point which prominently figured in the discussion, I am sure he must have looked into the records that are available. My honoured colleague has asked whether the minutes were kept or not and what the note is. Therefore, I presume that Mr. Shivraj Patil, a conscientious Minister, must have looked into the minutes, must have looked into the notes, must have been well prepared before coming and making a statement. And the statement that he made is in two parts. One is that they were not prepared to give written information but they were prepared to give oral information. But he also gave a reason why he rejected at that moment or subsequently the day after or 2 days after, before the 6th. And the reason is that we are going to constitute a Parliamentary Committee, and this information can be given to the Parliamentary Committee. That means, if they retraced the steps, it was because they wanted this information to be given to the Parliamentary Committee as per his own admission. If one has to read this, which sane person or insane person, which rural person or urban person, which knowledgeable person or ignorant person, which trusted friend or diabolical enemy, which person sworn in the faith of Constitution or in the name of the people, would have understood it differently from the simple, fair english that has been used by Mr. Shivraj Patil? How in any quarters, excepting perhaps the headquarters, could there be any doubt regarding the statement made by Shri Shrivraj Patil? Therefore, I would like to ask the Minister as to which part of the statement, which sentence, which part of the sentence could have led to different interpretations and if these sentences were so ambiguous leading to different interpretations, I think the entire statement of the Minister could not be accepted. The totally of the statement also about which he talks should not be accepted. That means that he is capable of giving multiple interpre-

tations for every sentence he uses. It is not my accusation. That is what he is trying to give as an explanation in the subsequent note. Therefore, I would like to ask the Minister when he made the statement, having responded to the question of July 3, July 4, July 6, of Mr. Bredin's visit and his discussions with officials or with Ministers etc., we do not know about that, when he made this statement, was he in consultation with those minutes or proceedings whatever they were, or not? If he was in consultations, is it a fact that Mr. Bredin offered information either by himself or by the Committee which has to go in this on the 6th, orally but not in writing? And is it a fact that Mr. Bredin was told on that day about the Parliamentary Committee. If the Parliamentary Committee's mention was there, what was the reaction? Has it been put on record? And why did he offer to send a full team, why did he offer? Was there any discussion? Therefore all these questions cannot be set at rest keeping in view the subsequent explanations that he has given. The only thing that can be said is that he was afraid of speaking the truth.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): I would request the Hon. Member to be brief.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: And he was not prepared to face the truth, truth which is glaring on the face of the Government and their attempts like the one which was made on the 14th are nothing but attempts to run away from facts, run away from truth and try to conceal from the nation what has been the patent fact. Therefore, in my considered view what was stated on the 2nd as the correct statement is the wrong statement, whereas what was stated on the first day is the more accurate statement, and if he has got facts to disprove this, I would like him to place those before the House.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, मैं एक जुमले से अपनी बात शुरू करूंगा । ज्यूरिसप्रुडेंस में स्पष्ट लिखा हुआ है—एक सिद्धांत है उसका ।

एक माननीय सदस्य : काहे का ?

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : लीगल ज्यूरिसप्रुडेंस का मेन एक सिद्धांत है । मेडिकल नहीं लीगल का—कि अपराधी चाहे कितनी सावधानी से अपराध करे, कुछ न कुछ अपने अपराध की निशानी छोड़ जाता है ।

तो मैं यह कहना चाहता हूं कि बहुत सी कोशिशें की गई बचाव की, एक रास्ता बदला गया, दूसरा रास्ता बदला गया और तीसरा रास्ता बदला गया । महोदय, बात यहां से शुरू हुई कि पहली बार सूचना आई कि बोफोर्स पूरी रिपोर्ट देगा कस्टमर के मांगने पर, उसने कहा कि कस्टमर से हम कुछ नहीं छिपा सकते, कस्टमर को हम सूचना देंगे । वैसे हमारा सीक्रेसी मेनटेन करने का प्रिंसीपल है, लेकिन यह प्रिंसीपल दूसरों से सीक्रेसी मेनटेन करने का है, कस्टमर से सीक्रेसी मेनटेन करने का नहीं है । जब उसके बयान यह आ गए तो हमारी सरकार की ओर से दबाव पड़ा । दबाव क्या पड़ा कि अगर तुम पूरी सूचना दोगे तो हम तुम्हारा कांट्रैक्ट रद्द कर देंगे और अगर तुम कहो कि पूरी सूचना नहीं दे सकते हैं तो हम तुम्हारा कांट्रेक्ट जिंदा रखेंगे । क्योंकि यह अपोजीशन के लोगों से मांग है कि कांट्रैक्ट रद्द करो । तो इस तरह उसको उसने थ्रैट में कहा कि हम पूरी रिपोर्ट नहीं देंगे, तब कहा, जैसा कि सदन की प्रापर्टी बन गया है माननीय मंत्री जी का बयान कि मौखिक देगा । पहले आया कि पूरी रिपोर्ट देगा, दूसरी स्टेज आई कि मौखिक देगा और तीसरी स्टेज आई कि मौखिक भी नहीं देगा । अब जो चिटठी है मैं उसे कोट करना चाहता हूं ।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): I would request hon. Member to seek only clarification from the hon. Minister.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह: मैं बिल्कुल वहीं आ रहा हूं। मैं सरकार को चार्ज कर रहा हूं कि यह जो तीसरी चिट्ठी यहां पढ़ी गई जो कि बोफोर्स के द्वारा लिखी गई बताई गई वह पूरी तरह से कन्कोक्टेड फेब्रिकेटेड है और इस चिट्ठी को चैलेंज करता हूं और इस आधार पर चलेंज करता हूं, ज्यादा नहीं, उस चिट्ठी के ओरिजन को जहां से लिखी गई है, इस सदन के दो या तीन आदमी जाएं, एक तो प्रिविलेज कमेटी के चेयरमैन जाएं, पूरी कमेटी छोड़ दीजिए... (व्यवधान) केवल इस लैटर के बारे में यह बहुत इसमें बात है... (व्यवधान) आप लोग गड़बड़ मत करिए, थोड़ा धीरज से सुनिए। इस चिट्ठी को मैं पढ़ रहा हूं। मुझको उतनी अंग्रेजी नहीं आती जितनी इनको आती है। लेकिन मैं थोड़ा-थोड़ा अर्थ समझ सकता हूं। आप खुद इसका अर्थ निकालेंगे कितनी कंट्राडिक्ट्री है यह पूरी चिट्ठी, एक ही सफे में तीन बातें एक-दूसरे को काटने वाली हैं। मैं चिट्ठी को पढ़ता हूं।

"We would, however, like to restate that the termination costs were not paid to any Indian citizen or Indian company, consequently including any member of the Indian Government and any other Government official."

इसका अर्थ यह निकल सकता है कि सीधे इंडियन कंपनी को नहीं देकर किसी विदेशी आदमी के जरिए पैसा दिया गया और सर्कुस-वे में यह यहां पहुंचा। इसका अर्थ क्लीयर है।

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय: हुआ यही है।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह: अब आप कहते हैं और एक बात पहले कही है कि मिडलमैन नहीं था। आप देखिए, फिर इसी के नीचे लिखा है कि मिडलमैन भी था, जिससे एजेंसी इनकी तय थी। यह सारी दुनिया जानती है। हम लोगों का क्या चार्ज है? यह नहीं कि बोफोर्स ने पैसा क्यों दिया, बोफोर्स ही नहीं, विदेश की जितनी कंपनियां माल बेचती हैं दुनिया जानती है कि अपने एजेंट रखती हैं और सौदा करवाती हैं। यह सब जानते हैं। हमारा यह चार्ज नहीं है कि बोफोर्स ने क्यों मिडिलमैन रखा, विदेशी रखा, इंडियन [illegible] रखा, यह हमारा चार्ज नहीं है, हमारा चार्ज यह है कि हमारी सरकार ने पैसा लिया। (व्यवधान) चार्ज यह है और यह चार्ज सबस्टांशीएट हम नहीं करते हैं। यह चिट्ठी जो बचाने के लिए है इस चिट्ठी को मैं खाली इंटरप्र[illegible]ता हूं ....(व्यवधान)।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): I would request the hon. Member to seek clarifications on the basis of the Minister's statement.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह: दो-तीन बात कह लेने के बाद करूंगा।... (व्यवधान)...इसमें सेकेण्ड है–

"We once again want to underline that Bofors won the contract in direct international competition and as a result of direct negotiations with the Government of India without involving middlemen, etc."

यहां कहा गया है कि मिडिलमेन नहीं था, हां पहले पैरा में कहा कि इण्डियन सिटिजन या इंडियन कंपनी नहीं थी, तो कंट्राडिक्टरी दोनों में है। तीसरी बात, जो चिट्ठी में है–

"We further confirm—" Please, let me read this is the property of the House. I am reading it.

"We further confirm that the said termination costs....", remember "termination costs"..,

"...had no effect or influence on the total value of the contract".

हम कहां कह रहे हैं। आपने कांट्रेक्ट रद्द कर दिया, जो कांट्रेक्ट रद्द करने का पैसा देना पड़ा, इसमें तो हमको झगड़ा भी नहीं है। हम कह रहे हैं कि आप इसको कंफर्म कर रहे हैं, जो पैसा दिया, वह कितना दिया, परसेंटेज में नहीं दिया, यहां कह रहे हैं। टोटल बीयरिंग क्या है, जो पैसा दिया, जो कांट्रेक्ट रद्द किया, उसमें क्या प्रपोरशन दिया, यह बात नहीं है। मान लो पैसा दिया आपने 50 करोड़, आप प्रपोरशन मत दीजिए, हम परसेंटेज निकाल लेंगे, परसेंटेज निकालना हमारे हाथ में है। लेकिन आप कह रहे हैं, परसेंटेज नहीं दिया, लेकिन पैसा दिया। आप कह रहे हैं क्लीयर। आप अंग्रेजी जरा ज्यादा जानते हैं, पाटिल जी... (व्यवध...)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): The hon. Member has taken more than ten minutes. I would request him to ask clarifications now.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : मैं क्लेरीफिकेशन पर आ रहा हूं। आप तो सहयोग करिए। अब यह कह रहे हैं कि, लास्ट पैरा है चिट्ठी का–

"We have learnt that a Parliamentary Committee is in the process of being appointed and we will, of course, extend our cooperation to the Committee."

कमेटी को कोपरेट करने की बात कह रहे हैं और तुरन्त मंत्री जी आकर पढ़ रहे हैं 14 को कि वह मौखिक रूप से कुछ बताने से इंकार कर रहे हैं। तो अब बताया जाय कि कोपरेशन क्या करेंगे? मौखिक बताएंगे नहीं और लिखित भी नहीं बताएंगे। तो जो यहां से पार्लियामेण्टरी कमेटी जाएगी स्वीडन में, क्या उसको बाल डान्स कराएंगे या वहां हवा खिलवा लाएंगे या वहां बड़े-बड़े होटलों में नाचघरों में ठहराएंगे? यही कोपरेशन होगा? कोपरेशन तो हम चाहते हैं कि हमको सत्य बताएं। सत्य बताएंगे नहीं और वह कह रहे हैं कि हम ओरली नहीं बताएंगे हम लिखित नहीं बताएंगे और कहते हैं कि कमेटी को पूरा सहयोग करेंगे। इसलिए यह चिट्ठी पूरी फेबरिकेटेड है, जाली है और इस जाली चिट्ठी को हम चुनौती देते हैं। हम चाहते हैं कि यहां से एक-दो आदमी जायं, 24 घण्टे में मामला तय हो जायगा, यहां से एक प्रिविलेज कमेटी के चेयरमेन और एक कोई विपक्ष का आदमी, आप किसी को ले लीजिए... (**व्यवधान**)...

एक माननीय सदस्य : वाजपेयी जी को भेज दीजिए।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : किसी को भी आप भेज दीजिए और वहां जाकर केवल इस चिट्ठी की सत्यता की जांच की जाय। तो यह मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि आखिर यह परस्पर विरोधी बातें इसमें क्यों आयी हैं? इन परस्पर बातों के लिए क्या कारण है?

अब एक बात और है, जो 24 अप्रैल, 1987 को चिट्ठी लिखी और आडिट ब्यूरो की जो पूरी रिपोर्ट है, ये दोनों चिट्ठियां सदन में रखी जानी चाहिए। उसके बाद मैं चाहूंगा कि इसके बीच में इन लोगों की क्या बातें हुई, वह सदन के सामने लाएं।

3 P.M.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: Sir, I would be very very brief. In the course of this debate, while asking the explanation on the statement made by me on 14th of August many points have been raised and allow me to submit that some of the points which are made may be treated as relevant and others may not be treated as relevant. I think I am not expected to reply to these points whic are not pertinent to the subject matter which is before us today..

SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: Everything is relevant.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN). No, no, it is the discretion of the Minister. What is relevant and what is not relevant, you will have your own discretion.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: The points on which they would say that I have not denied this or that thing, I would like to say that those points which are not relevant to today's debate I am not going to accept them. Wherever it is necessary to deny, it can be treated that I have denied them and I am not going into each of the points.

One of the points which was made related to the talk the hon. Prime Minister had with the pressmen in Rashtrapati Bhawan and its report in the newspapers. I was asked whether my statement was having anything to do with his talk to the reporters and what had appeared in the newspapers. I would like to say that my statement has nothing to do with that.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: That was expected that you will say that.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Not convincing.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: The question which would be asked is, why did I make the statement?

And I think I must give an explanation as to why I made that statement on 14th of August.

SHRI L. K. ADVANI: The first one or the second one?

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: I am talking of the second. First one, of course, I was replying to the debate and nobody will question that. They would ask, why did I make the statement on 14th? It was also asked, why did I not come before the House on 13th? It was also asked, why did I come at 5.00 O'clock, at the fag end of the day's working in the House? On 12th I made the statement in the House. On 13th the statement was reported in the newspapers and I had the opportunity of reading some of the newspapers. I try to read a few newspapers and that day also I read a few newspapers. Excepting one or two newspapers this fact was not mentioned.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Which fact?

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: In one or two newspapers what was mentioned was this. Shivraj Patil said that Bofors' Vice President Mr. Bredin had been willing to reveal the names of persons who received the commissions orally, but not in writing. This is very categorical. I revealed to the House that the Bofor Company was willing to give the names of the persons who received it. The statement which I made is before this House. Anybody can read and anybody can find out if these words and sentences are appearing, in the statement. They are not there, as they are reported. Now this has appeared the newspapers. One more paper hinted at it. And other newspapers did not hint at it.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: On a point of order. We based our arguments by reading from the official proceedings only. We did not base our arguments on the newspaper reports. So what a particular newspaper has published is not relevant. We should stick to his statement on the 12th and also on the 14th.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: Mr. Upendra, I am giving the explanation; I am depending on the explanation. I am clarifying. I am giving the explanation. In two newspapers, one version had appeared. In other newspapers that version had not appeared. And it had created doubt in the minds of the people, some of the outside. It was my duty to explain and to clear the doubt.

Two courses were open to me. One course open to me was to write to the newspaper and say "what you have reported in your newspaper is not correct, please correct it". The second course which was available to me was to come before the House and say that this is what I had stated but this has appeared in the newspapers and the second day also my statement on the floor of the House would be reported in the newspapers and that would clarify. So I wanted to clear the doubt in the minds of the people outside which I thought was created because of the reporting in some of the newspapers. Maybe they had not paid attention, maybe they had put a certain kind of interpretation to my statement, may be they were mixing up the things and they were interpreting the things in such a fashion outside the House.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Can you tell us where they differed from your official version?

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: I am coming to that. I had to come to that. Sir, this was the reason I made the statement in the House. Now if you are correcting my statement in the House with something which had happened in Rashtrapati Bhawan, well, it is not correct, it would be unjust to my leader and it would be unjust to me also.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: One second, Mr. Patil. Do you stand by your earlier statement? You please reply to that first.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: I am coming to that. I will answer that question. Your question is very good. I will answer that. I am expected to answer that. Now I was asked why did not made a statement on the 13th. I read the newspapers on the 13th. I thought of writing to the editor and the people who were responsible for that. I was thinking about it. Moreover I got this report on the 14th. I would naturally, have thought of going through the report and finding out whether I had slipped anywhere or not. It is quite natural for human beings to slip. If I commit a mistake I would not think that coming before this august House and saying "I am wrong" is something which I should not do. But I wanted to know myself whether I had comitted any mistake. I wanted to go through the report. When I got it on the 14th, I decided to adopt a course of action and I adopted it and then I came here.

Then you are asking: why did you come at 5 o'clock? Now 14th was a day on which the morning time I had my Question Hour in the Lok Sabha. So I was there. Then this is on record my making the statement and things like that.

I came here at 5 o'clock. Having come here at 5 o'clock, you wanted to have an explanation from me today. Did I object to that? I did not object to the Statement you wanted to have. You made long speeches. Some of the speeches were beautifully worded. About the contents, I may differ. But did we object to your asking us the explanation? Not at all. You made long speeches—quite long speeches, you know, and about two hours have been consumed on asking the explanation and giving it. Did I want to make it at your back? Not at all. Coming to the House and making

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a statement on the floor of the House instead of making a statement outside the House or writing to the auditor is certainly better. I adopted that course. I don't think that you can have any objection to the course which I adopted in this matter. This is my explanation.

The second point is, well, you have done me a favour by quoting some of the statements which I have made. All that I was thinking is that you were paying me back in the same coin because while replying to the debate I had quoted your sentences, and this time you were quoting my sentences. I went with an impression that you were trying to pay me back.

Well, Sir, I would like to reply to the point which my learned friend, Mr. Ghosh made. What did I say on that day itself?

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Page 797.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: That you have quoted. What did I say on that day? I said:

> "Now we had asked for certain information, and the information we had asked for is about the commission paid which has been mentioned in the audit report."

We had asked for the information which related to the audit report. We wanted to know the commissions, for what contract, to whom and things like that. And, Sir, what did I say again? This is very important. I am starting my sentence:

> "If the information is given to some of us or to the officers in the Ministry orally, claiming confidentiality, anybody can say that you got the information but you are not disclosing. And anybody can say that you got the names but you are not disclosing."

Sir, I am saying that here itself I am explaining that somebody may talk to us or somebody may speak to us, "Names are given to you. You are not giving us the names." This very fact I am stating here itself in my statement. Immediately, within two, three minutes time of my making the statement, you allude that we got the names, you say that we got the names orally. In this statement itself I have said that you would have doubted, if we had talked that we got the names. Anybody can say that. That shows there was no opportunity of getting the names orally. Sir, very categorically on page 800 I have said it:

> "We had wanted the information. They had not given the information and there was no convincing indication also that having come here in the delegation, they would give us the information."

At that moment, immediately after that, I had used exactly the words and phrases I have used here. I had said that there was no convincing indication that having come here in the delegation, they would give us the information. In the statement itself I have said, Sir, that the names were not given to us. I have said that if they were not indicating that they would give the information, then, there was no use of talking to them or writing to them and doing that. Now, this is very clear, this is very categorical and it is not at a tangent with the statement which I have made on the 14th. This is a statement not correcting the statement which I made on the 12th, but this is a statement which contains the essence and the gist of the totality of the statement I made on the 12th of August. It is not a correction but it is giving in essence, of the totality what was stated on the 12th. And this is what exactly I have stated. What I have stated is:

> "The fact of the matter is that Mr. Bredin did not give any convincing indication that a delegation from Bofors would be prepared to give information required..."

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Rajasthan): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, if the hon. Minister would yield for a minute, I would like to say that the emphasis is on the phrase "convincing indication." A simple question that I would like the hon. Minister to clarify is: was any indication given? If it was not convincing, what is the subjective criteria by which this degree of conviction was being judged? And if any indication was given, what indication was given? Because, between 3 and 4 considerable shift of position has taken place and it continues to disturb us.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: Sir, I would not venture to interpret each and every word I have stated. You could very well imagine in what condition I was speaking. My friends were getting up and asking me questions and all the time I was yielding and then I was making the statement. It was not a court room where the Judge was sitting, the other side was keeping quiet, I had studied my file and each and every word I was interpreting, it was not something like that. Sir, what you have to look at in a statement made on the floor of the House is the totality, the essence of the statement. The toality or the essence of the statement indicates one thing or the other thing. It indicates one thing. You should accept that thing. If it indicates something other you will accept it.

Now, letters have been there before you. They have claimed confidentiality. They have disclosed certain things. This kind of condition is there. What we are saying is that we have appointed a Committee. This was not discussed with them. But what is the position today? We have appointed a Committee. We wanted that Committee to know the truth.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: You are replying to my point. In your statement you have said "When we found that the information was not coming to us in writing but they wanted to convey that information orally, we thought, it is not wise to have it at that point of time." Now correcting this statement, you say in the latter statement that "a delegation from Bofors did not give us any convincing information that they would be prepared to give information required by us in writing or orally." So in your statement correcting the earlier statement you have said that they did not give us any indication of giving information even orally. But in your earlier statement you have said that the company was prepared to give the information orally but you wanted to have it in writing. So my question is whether you stand by your previous statement that the company was prepared to give you the information orally but you wanted to have it in writing.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: Sir, this is the condition in which I am expected to speak. This is the condition I was replying that day also. My thought process is broken. I had to jump from one point to the other point. I had to do that.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: We can only pity you, Mr. Patil.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: Need not.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): Order please. You ask the clarifications the Minister will reply. *Interruptions*)

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: He is replying to my point. That is why I am helping him. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: He is landing himself into further trouble. We pity him. Let him give a brief reply and finish (*Interruptions*).

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : महोदय, एक छोटा-सा सवाल उठता है। 12 तारीख को वे जानकारी देने के लिए तैयार थे, लेकिन जबानी जानकारी देने

[श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी]

के लिए तैयार थे, लिखकर देने के लिए तैयार नहीं थे, आज कह रहे हैं कि जबानी जानकारी देने के लिए भी तैयार नहीं थे। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि जो भी जानकारी वे देने के लिए तैयार थे वह आपने क्यों नहीं ली ? और वह जानकारी क्या थी ?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: I am on a point of order, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): What is your point of order? Please take your seat.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: He does not want to listen to the Minister.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sir, the Opposition here is behaving like a... (*Interruptions*).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): What is your point of order?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sir, my point of order is very clear. The Government has appointed a Committee to know the truth and they can join it. (*Interruptions*) If they have some clarifications or doubts they can seek.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): Please take your seat. It is not a point of order. This is not something like a'.. (*Interruptions*) He may not be allowed to answer.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: Sir, I would not like to prolong this debate. It is not necessary also. We had a very, very long debate and the Committee is there. It can go into it. If there is any other occasion, we can speak. But today, Sir, I would like to make a statement saying that if Mr. Ghosh is saying that my first statement is one thing and in the second statement I correct it... (*Interruptions*). The latter statement is correct always.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Sir, will the Minister kindly tell us today will be the last or tomorrow from the Prime Minister's office he will be sending another statement? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Is it the last word? (*Interruptioss*).

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Sir, he has an indefensible brief.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: Sir, I have no more explanation to give. (*Interruptions*).

श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी : उस दिन जो मीटिंग थी उसकी मिनिट्स सभा-पटल पर रख दें।

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: I am not on that point. I have not gone through the file. I am not going to speak from memory. I am not going to make any statement on that point. (*Interruptions*).

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Sir, it is very important.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): But the Minister is not hearing. (*Interruptions*).

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): Interruptions will not help the Minister to reply.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN: (Shri G. SWAMINATHAN): Mr. Lakshmanna, you please take your seat. If the Minister is not yielding, how can you interfere? It is not a Parliamentary practice.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: You ask him to yield.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): How can I do it? It is his option. You please take

your seat. If you have got anything to ask, you can ask later on.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: Sir, while concluding, I would like to state that between what I have stated on 14th of August, 1987 and the essence and totality of my statement on 12th of August, 1987, there is no contradiction and what we have stated three stands. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Sir, I have not received the reply.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : इसका जवाब इतिहास देगा कि सच्चाई क्या थी ?

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Sir, two very important points have been raised here and I wish, the hon. Minister had stated what he proposes to do in response to the request for the minutes of the meeting. That is very crucial because the whole truth will be out, what was the talk with Mr. Bredin. Is the Minister willing to place those minutes before the House?

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: I should know first whether there are minutes of the meeting or not. I was not ready on that point.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the second very relevant point is that Bofors offered some information in its letter dated 24th April. Is the Minister willing to lay that letter on the Table of the House? These are very crucial things. The moment these two things are decided, the House will come to know a lot about this affair. Is there any answer from the Government? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: I am not ready on that.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, Shri Dipen Ghosh asked me a question specifically and that was as to the date of the letter from Bofors which I read out. So, Sir, that letter was dated the 6th and was delivered to the Government on the 10th of August. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: In reply to 16th July letter?

SHRI K. C. PANT: You have not listened carefully. Even that day, I mentioned when was the letter sent, what was the immediate reply. I mentioned it that very day. Secondly Atal Ji mentioned that Prime Minister was going to be given some information. So, I think, in all fairness, I should read out the statement that has appeared. (*Interruptions*). You read a lot of things and all your information comes from the newspapers. That is the whole problem. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: When you are concealing the facts, what is the other source?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Nothing is wrong with it. In fact, I am glad that Atal Ji mentioned that the Information Officer of the Defence Ministry was seen going to the Indian Express. Can anything establish the Government bonafides better, vis-a-vis the Press? We know what the Indian Express is writing everyday and yet when it came to giving information, the Government on its part, did not single out the Indian Express for not giving the information. No amount of your logic is going to change this. You must listen to this, to our views. But we have given information to Indian Express as well as to other newspapers. The Government's approach is not capricious in this matter. Therefore, I think, for that, at any rate, you can give some credit. Sir, I am quoting the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister, clarifying certain aspects of the matter, has stated that Bofors had not offered orally to give the information required by us. He added that there was no indication,

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at any time, that Bofors were prepared to give orally information about the names of the recipients or any amounts paid to them — the precise information needed by the Government of India. So it is quite clear. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: It contradicts Mr. Patil's statement. (*Interruptions*)

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : परस्पर विरोधी हैं, यह बात हम कहना चाहते हैं (व्यवधान)

श्री के० सी० पंत : आपको जो बात कहनी थी वह मैंने सुन ली है। आपको जब फिर चेयर द्वारा मौका दिया जाएगा तो फिर सुनेंगे। अगर नहीं मौका देंगे तो नहीं सुन सकते।

Therefore, I wanted to make this clear because this was mentioned. Basically, the point is, Bofors has also written us a letter which I read out in the House. So, after this particular incident, there is one more factor, a letter written which I read out here in which they have not given the information, which my friends feel they were ready to give. This is on record. They have not given the information. I do not know from where they got the information, when they feel that they were prepared to give the information. They feel. May be they are prepared to give the information orally. That is what somebody said. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: The Minister himself says. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI K. C. PANT: There is a Parliamentary Committee which is being set up.

श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी : क्या करेंगे पार्लियामेंटरी कमेटी का ?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Now, the whole Parliament has set up the Committee. Advaniji, who is a respector of institutions, should not speak about the Parliamentary Committee so lightly. I requdst him not to speak in that tone. (*Interruptions*).

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : जब मौखिक भी सूचना नहीं देंगे तो पार्लियामेंटरी कमेटी किस बात के लिए ?

SHRI K. C. PANT: The Parliamentary Committee... (*Interruptions*). Either we have respect for Parliament and Parliamentary Committees or we do not. You cannot have it both ways. You asked for a Parliamentary Cmmittee. Obviously you have some.... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: You are subverting the institution. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: We asked, but not the sort you are giving.

SHRI K. C. PANT: You are entitled to change your mind. I do not say you are not. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: As far back as 17th June we have stated to the Prime Minister when he was also present. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI K. C. PANT: You are making a wrong statement. (*Interruptions*) This continuous interruption will not enable me to finish even one sentence. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: I request you to yield for a minute.

SHRI K. C. PANT: I always respon to sweet reasonableness. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: These are sweet nothings. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: I respect both of you because you are innocent and honest. But unfortunately, you are caught. We

would... (*Interruptions*). We would like to save you from your follies. My point is, he said, perhaps not deliberately, that the Opposition wanted the Committee of Parliament to go into this question and he said we are running away from this Committee. May I say... (*Interruptions*). We demanded such a Parliamentary enquiry. We are not shying away from this Committee. But we are not cooperating with this Committee because it has no powers, it is truncated. You want to make it a manoeuvring device, a rescue operation. Have you got our terms of reference. If you agree on our terms of reference, we would cooperate with you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): I would only wish to say that there had been a statement and there had been a clarification already laid. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: My question was, what exactly transpired in that meeting between Bredin and the Government of India? What exactly transpired in that meeting?

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: What happened on 3rd and 4th July?

SHRI K. C. PANT: The fact of the matter is and I think in all fairness most of my friends opposite will agree to this, that the question which has just been posed by Shri Gurupadaswamy becomes relevant only because even at this stage we can all work together to make a success of the Parliamentary Committee. I know that they do not want to join the Committee. In spite of that, even though they will probably reject it, even then, I think that it is my duty once again to ask them to join it so that we can together try to unravel the truth, we work together for this; our objective is the same, so that we can work together and work this out and it will strengthen Parliament as an institution...

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : जब मौखिक सूचना नहीं देते हैं तो किस बात के लिए जाएंगे।

SHRI K. C. PANT: Does nobody control him at all?

The problem is, after all, the whole world is watching. This is not only something which concerns the two sides here; the whole world is watching. We are known to be one of the most successful democracies and the largest democracy in the world. Now, we set up a Parliamentary Committee. Maybe, there are differences in some aspects; maybe, there is a lack of confidence today in each other; maybe, the Opposition feels there is a lack of trust—Atalji made the point the other day. Even then I say, why not give it a trial, why not see if it works; if it does not work, well, their options are still open. After all, is it unreasonable to expect them to give it a trial? This Parliamentary Committee is something they wanted. On minor differences...

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: They are not minor.

SHRI K. C. PANT: All right, they are not minor; major ones. As regards investigating powers we say Government will give them; we say the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Attorney-General will be available; we say evidence can be taken and subject to the rules we say—whatever there is, I do not want to repeat that—they can go abroad, they can call for people. That is a long debate and I do not want to go into all that again. I only say, why not give it a trial, why not give it at least a trial, and I request my honourable friends to consider: Have we reached a stage where all of us put more faith and credence in some inquiring agency

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in some foreign country as compared to our own Parliamentary Committee? Have we come to this now? I request them to consider...

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: It is because you are bent on concealing the facts.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Your Prime Minister has sought information from foreign agencies, the Swedish Government, the Swedish National Audit Bureau. Your Prime Minister has trust in them!

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : उपाध्यक्ष जी, हमने मांग की थी कि मिस्टर ब्रेडन के साथ जो बातचीत हुई है उसके नोट्स सभापटल पर रखे जायें। 24 अप्रैल का सारा सभापटल पर रखा जाये। कमेटी में मामला सौंपकर सारे विवाद को भट्ठे खाते में डालना चाहते हैं।

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: What for did your Prime Minister get them? Let the note on talks between Bredin and the Government of India be placed on the Table of the House.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: And the letter of 24th April. That is vital.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Then the truth will come out, whether they give information orally or in writing.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Are you prepared to give that note?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Shri Dipen Ghosh is a senior Member...

AN HON. MEMBER: No, he is not a senior Member.

SHRI K. C. PANT: He is senior enough to be a leader of...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: He is not the leader.

SHRI K. C. PANT: I am not trying to score a debating point over it. The point I want to make is we sh ould make a success of the Parliamentary Committee..... (**व्यवधान**)

उन्होंने रेज किया है, गुरुपदस्वामी साहब ने रेज किया हैमैंने तो नहीं रेज किया है। गुरुपदस्वामी का मैं जवाब दे रहा हूं.. (**व्यवधान**) आप नहीं चाहते हैं....

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : हमको तो आपने जवाब नहीं दिया है, आपके पास कोई जवाब नहीं है।

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: *You raised it and I replied. You* raised the issue. That is why I replied.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): Please allow the Minister...

डा० रत्नाकर पाण्डेय : (उत्तर प्रदेश) इनको बोलने दीजिए। बाद में चाहें तो क्लेरिफिकेशन्स ले लीजिए। हर सेंटेंस पर मिनिस्टर साहब को इंटरप्ट किया जा रहा है। कैसे हाउस चलेगा। हाउस की डिगनिटी मेन्टेन कीजिए।

ठाकुर जगपाल सिंह : (मध्य प्रदेश) ये बोल रहे थे तो हम चुप बैठे थे और जब मिनिस्टर साहब रिप्लाई दे रहे हैं तो हर सेन्टेंस पर खड़े हो जाते हैं।

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: There is no reply.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: We want the minutes of the meeting.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN: (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): Please allow the Minister to speak... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: There is no reply... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, we wanted to know

what actually transpired in that meeting. If they are not prepared to say it today, to say what actually transpired in that meeting, let a note on that discussion be laid on the Table of the House. (*Interruptions*)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): Mr. Dipen Ghosh, please take your seat. What I am saying is this: Let the Minister speak now and one of the leaders can speak later and then we will try to find out... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: First of all, he has to reply to my point... (*Interruptions*).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): Let the Minister speak first and, afterwards, if anyone of you wants to speak... (*Interruptions*)...anyone of you can speak and clarify the matter. First, please let the Minister speak and, later on, either Vajpayeeji or yourself can speak... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI K. C. PANT: May I clarify, Sir? If they do not want me to speak, I will not speak... (*Interruptions*)...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI K. C. PANT: I spoke only in response to what Mr. Dipen Ghosh said. Then, Mr. Gurupadaswamy...

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: You provoked us... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI K. C. PANT: All right. I provoked and you fell into the trap. Put it as you like. But the fact is that you put a question to me and I tried to answer because it is a matter of courtesy to do so. Atalji has known me for so long and I have always been courteous. You asked a question and out of courtesy I was replying to that. Now, there are no clarifications and cross-questions. The questions I have already answered. Sir, I have also made an appeal to them and let them consider it. (*Interruptions*) My request is only to strengthen the institution of Parliament and Parliamentary Committees. Let them get into it, let them look at all the papers, ask any questions they like and let them not take the attitude that they will make our Committee powerless, but would go on asking questions. That is not right... (*Interruptions*)... We are setting up a Committee. Let them by all means joint the Committee. they are welcome to the Committee. Let them get into the Committee, let them look at any paper they like, let them ask any questions they like and let them discuss the questions threadbare... (*Interruptions*). We are setting up an institution for this purpose... (*Interruptions*)...It is your own Committee ... (*Interruptions*)... You get into it. But you will not go into that and then you will go on asking questions. The Government is keeping the doors open, the Government is opening the doors. In this Parliamentary Committee, you will get to see everything. The other day you asked me here, "How will the Official Secrets Act work here?". I explained. They wanted to give all the information. I say it again on the floor of the House: Come and see the information. But you will not see the information because you are not interested in the information... (*Interruptions*)

श्री अटल बिहारी बाजपेयी : क्या इनफर्मेशन दी है ?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Then come into the Committee कमेटी में आइये और सारी सूचना लीजिए।

The doors are wide open. Walk into the Committee... (*Interruptions*) It is your Committee and it is not our exclusive right and it is a Committee that you had asked for... (*Interruptions*). Now, you feel somehow like this. You have an allergy towards Parliamentary Committees? I do not know. All of a sudden, an allergy has developed. In the beginning, you

[Shri K. C. Pant]

wanted a Committee and asked why the Government was suspicious. Now the Government has agreed. Please come in and have a look at it and discuss everything threadbare. We have nothing to hide. By keeping it aside and not trying to raise questions in it, I do not think you are serving the cause of parliamentary democracy... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: We know Mr. Pant very well. This won't cut ice... (*Interruptions*) ...We wanted two specific things. He must answer. I asked him... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI K. C. PANT: Are you going to join the Committee?... (*Interruptions*)... Are you prepared to join the Committee?... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: It is irrelevant today... (*Interruptions*)... Today it is irrelevant... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: It is irrelevant... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: It is irrelevant... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI K. C. PANT: This is the only relevant question... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: It is irrelevant today... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI K. C. PANT: If you are interested in the facts, you will join the Committee... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Sir, we wanted two things. Are they prepared to lay on the Table... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Are you prepared to join the Committee? Why are you not joining the Committee? ... (*Interruptions*).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): Order, order, please... (*Interruptions*) Order, order. (*Interruptions*) Please take your seat. Minister has spoken. Now, please be brief and say only a few words.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: The only relevant thing was to seek clarifications about the statement made by Mr. Shivraj Patil on 14th August. There was no other relevancy. The only relevant thing was to seek clarifications about the statement made by Mr. Shivraj Patil correcting his statement of 12th August. The whole controversy revolves round what transpired in the meeting between Mr. Bredin and the Government of India officials and whether Mr. Bredin was prepared to give any information orally and whether they wanted it in writing. (*Interruptions*) Therefore, while seeking clarification before lunch, I had raised this question: Will the Minister kindly say what actually transpired in the meeting between Mr. Bredin and the Government of India on 3rd and 4th July? That point has not been answered. Will either of the two Ministers kindly reply to that point?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): That matter is already over.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: No. No. It is not over. Then I will take it that Mr. Shivraj Patil or Mr. Pant is hiding something.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Are you prepared to give the details? That is what we want to know.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): The Minister has explained that. You asked for clarifications and he is now asking you whether you will join the Committee. So, you are not interested.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: That is not relevant to the agenda today.

SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL: I was here only to answer the clarification they had asked on a particular point. On this point, I am not prepared.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: We walk out in protest.

(At this stage, some hon. Members left the Chamber).

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORANCE

The devastating floods in Assam, Bihar, West Bengal and some other parts of the country and the steps taken by Government in this regard

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN): Now, we will take up the Calling Attention. Shri Gurudas Das Gupta—not here; Shri Chaturanan Mishra—not here; Shri Suraj Prasad—not here; Shri Chitta Basu—not here; Shri Kailash Pati Mishra—not here; Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee—not here; Shri Pramod Mahajan—not here; Shri Ashwani Kumar—not here. Shri Rajni Ranjan Sahu.

श्री रजनी रंजन साहू : (बिहार) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं असम, बिहार, पश्चिमी बंगाल और देश के कुछ अन्य भागों में विनाशकारी बाढ़ और इस संबंध में सरकार द्वारा उठाये गये कदमों की ओर जल संसाधन मंत्री का ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूं ।

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): Sir, as the House is aware, flooos of severe intensity this year have caused damage affecting large sections of our people in the States of Assam, Bihar, West Bengal and Jammu & Kashmir.

In Assam, the Brahmaputra and its tributaries have been in spate for most of the time ever since the onset of monsoon; in north Bihar, practically all the tributaries of the Ganga have been overflowing since the middle of July; and in West Bengal, the Ganga, Teesta and their tributaries also have crossed the danger mark for certain periods. For some time, a few rivers in Orissa and eastern Uttar Pradesh also have crossed the danger mark. In Assam, the river Brahmaputra at Guwahati and Nimatighat has crossed the highest flood levels observed in the past. Also, in North Bihar, the rivers of the Adhwara Group at Ekmighat (in Darbhanga), the Bagmati at Benibad and Hayaghat, the Burhi Gandak at Rosera, Samasthipur, and Sikanderpur (in Muzaffarpur). the Kamla Balan at Jhanjharpur, the Kosi at Easua and Baltara, and the Mahananda at Jhawa have exceeded the highest flood levels recorded earlier. 17 districts in Assam, 22 districts in Bihar and 5 districts in West Bengal have been affected by floods.

We have been in constant touch with the State Governments. According to the information from the States, submergence and breaches of embankments have taken place which have affected an area of about 40.6 lakh ha. and a population of nearly 20 millions. The total value of damage has been placed at about Rs. 480 crores. The reports indicate that 273 persons have lost their lives.

I had written to the Chief Ministers and the Administrators of the Union territories well in advance to take precautionary measures and prepare contingency plans to meet the flood situation during the monsoon season. Officers of the Central Water Commission, Ganga Flood Control Commission and the Brahmaputra Board have visited the flood affected areas to study the situation and discuss measures with State Government officers. The Central Teams have visited Jammu &